TCS 4377/70

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
Directorate of Intelligence
24 April 1970

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Preliminary Assessment of the New Soviet Bomber

25X1D

25X1D 1. [redacted] This was the first evidence that the USSR had a prototype of a new strategic bomber under development.

2. [redacted] 25X1D

25X1D [redacted] The general configuration and size of the aircraft are evident, but specific details are not clear.

25X1D

3. [redacted] 25X1D

25X1D [redacted] It probably will be about 1973 or 1975--some four to six years--before the aircraft would be ready for operational service.

4. This lead time estimate is based on the development programs for comparable Soviet aircraft. The TU-22 Blinder, for example, is believed to have made its first flight in 1957 or possibly 1958 and entered service in 1962. Recent lead times for the development of modern combat aircraft have been longer: the Flagon interceptor made its first flight in 1961 and was operational in 1967, and the Foxbat fighter first flew in 1964 and is expected to enter service in 1970.

5. The intelligence information now available is not adequate for a firm assessment of the new bomber's performance characteristics.

25X1D [redacted] 25X1D

is no information on the type of engine installed. The preliminary estimate given below was prepared by the Foreign Technology Division of the USAF and assumes the use of an uprated version of the NK-144 afterburning turbofan used in the Soviet supersonic transport. Performance of the TU-22 Blinder is shown for comparison.

	New Bomber	TU-22 Blinder
Gross weight	254,000 lbs	185,000 lbs
Maximum speed at high altitude at sea level	over Mach 2 high subsonic	Mach 1.5 under 400 kts
Combat radius* Unrefueled 6,600 lbs of bombs	2,600 nm	1,800 nm
AS-4 Kitchen missile	2,700 nm	1,500 nm
One refueling 6,600 lbs of bombs	3,700 nm**	2,350 nm
AS-4 Kitchen missile	3,800 nm**	2,100 nm

25X1D [redacted] 25X1D

6. More precise analysis will be possible [redacted] but it may be some time--perhaps a year or more--before enough data are obtained for reliable detailed estimates.

* *Distances shown are based on a high altitude, all subsonic mission. Use of low altitudes or supersonic dash would reduce combat radius.*

** *Refueled distances are comparable to the 30- to 40-percent increase estimated for the TU-22. The actual amount of the increase depends on the type of tanker used and the mission profile flown.*

25X1D

7. [redacted]

25X1D

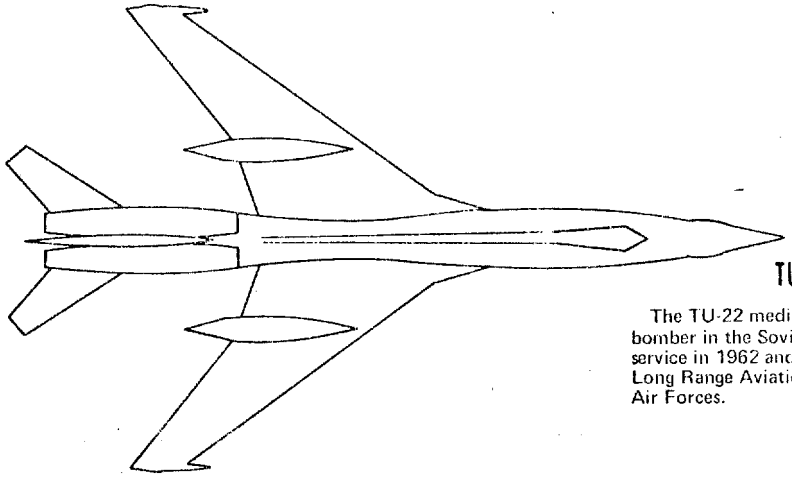
[redacted]

8. The present Soviet bomber forces are composed mainly of aircraft which have already been in service for some 10 to 15 years. The TU-16 Badger medium bomber, which entered service in 1954, still forms about two-thirds of the total bomber strength of Long Range Aviation and the Naval Air Forces. The TU-95 Bear and M-type Bison heavy bombers have been in service since 1956 and their numbers already are declining.

9. The TU-22 Blinder, first entered service in 1962, but has been deployed in only limited numbers. There is evidence that the Soviets are dissatisfied with this aircraft, and it is believed to have gone out of production in 1969. Thus, the Soviets clearly have a requirement for new aircraft if they intend to maintain their manned bomber capabilities through the Seventies and beyond.

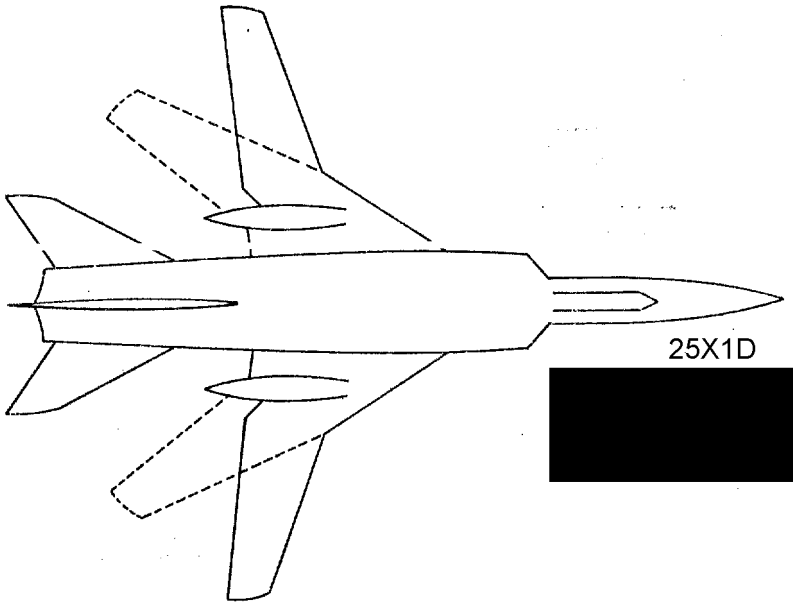
10. The size and general characteristics of the new aircraft place it somewhere between existing Soviet medium and heavy bombers, but a firmer evaluation of its capabilities will depend on more information on actual performance characteristics.

Comparison of NEW SOVIET BOMBER with TU-22 Blinder and US FB-111



TU-22 BLINDER

The TU-22 medium bomber is the newest bomber in the Soviet inventory. It entered service in 1962 and is deployed with both Long Range Aviation and the Soviet Naval Air Forces.

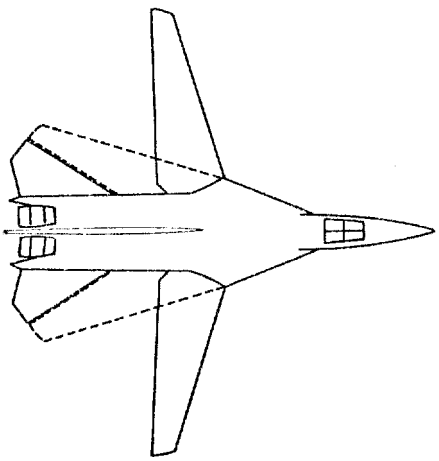


NEW BOMBER

(Provisional Drawing)

25X1D

[redacted]



US FB-111

The FB-111 is the most recent bomber developed by the US. It is now entering service with the Strategic Air Command in limited numbers.

TOP SECRET RUFF
96770 11-69 CIA
TCS 3800/69

TOP SECRET

CONTROL NO. TCS 4377/70

REFERRED TO OFFICE	RECEIVED			RELEASED		SEEN BY	
	SIGNATURE	DATE	TIME	DATE	TIME	NAME & OFFICE SYMBOL	DATE

Handle Via Indicated Controls

TALENT -KEYHOLE-COMINT

.....

.....

.....

WARNING

This document contains information affecting the national security of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws U. S. Code Title 18, Sections 793, 794 and 798. The law prohibits its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any manner to an unauthorized person, as well as its use in any manner prejudicial to the safety or interest of the United States or for the benefit of any foreign government to the detriment of the United States. It is to be seen only by personnel especially indoctrinated and authorized to receive information in the designated control channels. Its security must be maintained in accordance with regulations pertaining to the TALENT-KEYHOLE and Communications Intelligence Controls. No action is to be taken on any communications intelligence which may be contained herein, regardless of the advantage to be gained, if such action might have the effect of revealing the existence and nature of the source, unless such action is first approved by the appropriate authority.

TOP SECRET